The Marker Lamp

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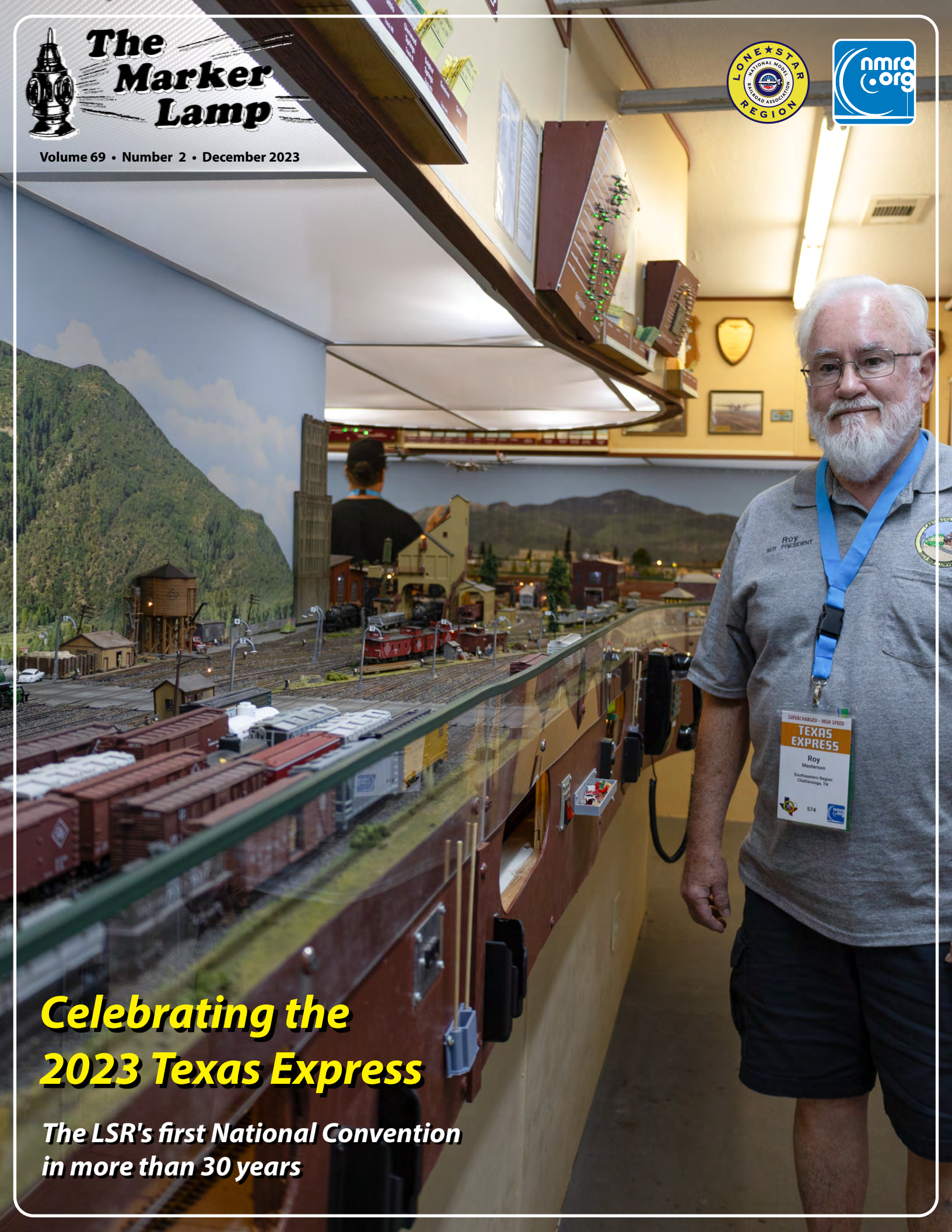

Celebrating the 2023 Texas Express

The LSR's first National Convention in more than 30 years

The Marker Lamp

The Official Publication of
The Lone Star Region of the
National Model Railroad
Association

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The editorial policy of The Marker Lamp, the official publication of The Lone Star Region, shall be to contribute, wherever possible, to the promotion, growth and understanding of the hobby of Model Railroading, within the confines of good taste and responsibility. The Marker Lamp is published once each quarter by and for the members of The Lone Star Region of The National Model Railroad Association. Articles appearing in The Marker Lamp are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the officers or membership of The Lone Star Region or The National Model Railroad Association.

Address all correspondence, news, photos and drawings to the editor. All material will be gladly accepted and will be used depending on the availability of space and suitability of material. None will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. Correspondence relating to Pike Ads and Dealer Ads should be addressed to Steve Sandifer steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net

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President's Message

by Donna Orr
donnalorrtx@gmail.com

What a Great Experience

We made it! The National NMRA 2023 Texas Express convention has come and gone. But not after a great deal of work from the convention committee. I have heard nothing but great things from members and non-members alike about how they enjoyed the convention. Many have said that it was the best convention in years.

Since this Marker Lamp is devoted to the convention, I hope each can tell their story. There are many pictures out there, taken by all attendees. Look everywhere, because they will be floating around. This being the first NMRA National Convention held in Texas since the 1980's, there was a high bar to meet.

Here's my experience with this convention: Having only put on a regional LSR convention, I could only imagine how much time and effort that this would take. Its seems that life went on hold from last October until this August. Daily interactions with the committee, the hotel and third parties that were involved. It did not even stop on weekends, or evenings. I can not imagine what it would have been like without our committee that worked daily on this project. Keep in mind that this committee was revamped in October of last year. That gave them less than a year to adjust, add, enhance, and pull this convention off. And they did it!

In case you did not know who put this convention together, here is a list of our committee: Peter Kazmir, Riley Triggs, Joe Leising, Steve Gratke, Chris Atkins, Michael Harang, Alan Price, Joe Rios, Jerry Hoverson, Don Winn, Speed Muller, Jeff Rykiel, Brooks Willig, David Kranda, David Podhrasky, Dick Brannon, Ken Kaiser, David Grein, John Garfield, Gerald Mabry, Betty Mitchell, Kevin Buchanan, Jim Packer, Michael Ross, David Haggar, Craig Brandtly, Christina Nason, Vickie Price, Rachael Price, Stephen Moore, Vic McTee, Michelle Kempema, David Crumption, Christina Zambri and your Chair – Donna Orr.

That was a great run and one not to be repeated by me. Good luck to the SurfLiner 2024. See you in Long Beach. **ML**

From the Editor

by Peter Kazmir
peter@centexnmra.org

Kindness is Key

This issue is all about the 2023 Texas Express, the NMRA National Convention that the LSR hosted back in August. It's hard to believe it's done! So much hard work went into making the event a reality. I really have to hand it to Donna, who I think spent at least an hour working on it every single day for months leading up to it; without her, it would not have happened. And of course, it took a lot of other people too - people who started the wheels in motion, who coordinated all the logistics, who wrangled the clinicians and the busses, and much, much more. I only had a small part to play - my team knew what they were doing so mostly I just needed to stay out of their way.

While it's a little unfair to mention anyone by name because so many people did so much to make the convention a success, I do want to mention a couple of folks on my team by name.

One is Riley Triggs who did some incredible work marketing the convention. The other is Steve Gratke, who built hundreds of individual web pages for the convention's web site *by hand*.

A few times at the convention, most notably at the banquet, NMRA President Gordy Robinson, MMR, talked about kindness. His message really resonated with me, and I hope - especially during the holiday season - you take it to heart as well.

In a world with so much selfishness, greed, and close-mindedness, kindness is key. We all want to be happy, to enjoy our lives, and to enjoy our hobby. It doesn't take much to recognize that and to be kind. You don't have to bend over backwards or say or do something you don't believe in, just be polite. Be respectful. Don't jump to conclusions and don't believe everything you hear.

The other day I watched a video by an airplane pilot who has a channel on YouTube. Someone had sent him a recording of an air traffic controller who sounded drunk, and who was potentially putting lives at risk. While the pilot agreed the controller should have been quickly replaced that day, he didn't just assume he was drunk - he specifically pointed out that the behavior could have been a result of low blood sugar, oxygen deprivation (it was in a high-altitude location), or a couple of other things. Calling that out instead of jumping to conclusions was such a small act of kindness, but it really set the tone, and the comments (which on YouTube can be pretty unkind) echoed that tone as a result.

One reason a lot of people don't like organizations like the NMRA, the LSR, or even some model railroad clubs is because there can often be a serious lack of kindness: Too many (pointless) arguments. Too many personality conflicts. Too much change. Not enough collaboration. Not enough honest conversation. I echo Gordy's hope that we can make our hobby's organizations a place for kindness. The hobby (and the world) will be better off for it.

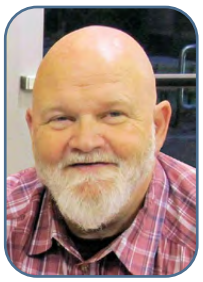
—

On that note, I want to apologize for the timeliness of this issue. It was supposed to go out a month or so after the convention but it (obviously) did not. There were reasons, but they aren't that important. I will do better in 2024 and have some plans to make the Marker Lamp easier to publish to help ensure a more reliable schedule. The next issue should be published around March 17.

—

Even though the national convention is scarcely behind us, I hope you are all planning to attend the **2024 LSR Convention, Where the Eagle Meets the Chief**. It will be held in the Houston area in mid-February. There will be plenty to see and do, and a great train show to boot. Until then, keep the fun in Model Railroading, and be kind! **ML**

Up the Tracks Events Calendar



by Bill Dryden
LSR Events Chair

Here are upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the *NMRA Magazine* and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me, via e-mail at bdr149@airmail.net.

WHERE THE EAGLE MEETS THE CHIEF
THE 2024 NMRA LONE STAR REGION CONVENTION
HOUSTON/PASADENA, TEXAS
February 15-17
https://turbotrains.com/2024lonestar/
REGISTER TODAY!
ATTENDEES GET FREE EARLY ENTRY TO HOUSTON TRAIN SHOW

EVENTS AND SHOWS

January

19th - 20th — *(Dallas/Plano)* **Dallas Area Train Show** (Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs). Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm Adults $10, Children 12 and under Free. Plano Civic Centre, 2000 E Spring Creek Parkway, Plano, TX. More information: https://www.dfwtrainshows.com/.

February

17th — *(Houston/Pasadena)* **Greater Houston Train Show**. Sat. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Admission $5, Under 12 FREE (max $10 per family). Pasadena Convention Center, 902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, TX. More information: https://sanjacmodeltrains.org/GHTS.php.

March

9th – 10th — *(Fort Worth/Grapevine)* **10th Annual Train-A-Palooza** (Sponsored by the Lone Star Hi-Railers). Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sat. 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Adults $5, 11-18 $2, 10 & under Free with Adult. Grapevine Convention Center, 1200 South Main Street, Grapevine, TX. More information: https://lonestarhirailers.com/train-a-palooza-tm.

RECURRING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

LSR Division 1 – Cowcatcher Division – Fort Worth
The Cowcatcher Division meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Texas Western Model Railroad Club, 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. For more information regarding the Cowcatcher Division or its programs, check their website: https://www.cowcatcherdivision.org.

LSR Division 3 - Trinity River Division – Allen
The Trinity River Division meets at 10:00 am on the 3rd Saturday of every month at the Christ Servant Lutheran Church, Allen Texas. Occasionally things change due to scheduling conflicts so pay close attention to the email meeting notices that go out a week before the meeting. If you would like to be added to the email list contact Robert Secrest at Robert.Secrest@hotmail.com.

LSR Division 4 – Cen-Tex Division – Austin
The Cen-Tex Division meets bi-monthly at the Austin Northwest Recreational Center, 2913 Northland Drive, Austin, TX. Meetings are held at 10:00 am on the 2nd Saturday of the *odd* months and include clinics, show-and-tell, DCC minute, social activities and a layout open house. For more information about upcoming meetings, see https://centexnmra.org or contact director@centexnmra.org to be added to the mail list.

LSR Division 5 - Texas Panhandle & West Division
Division 5 holds their meetings virtually on Zoom on the 3rd Monday of each month starting at 7:00 pm. Anyone that can join via Zoom is welcome to attend. Use this link to sign up for the division's monthly bulletin and keep up with events and happenings in the division: http://eepurl.com/hRLLm9 or email Headroadie2004@gmail.com.

LSR Division 6 – South Texas Division – San Antonio
The South Texas Division hosts meetings on the 2nd Saturday of *even* months at 11:00 am at the Longhorn Cafe at 12311 Nacogdoches Road in San Antonio. Please come out and join us for clinics, show-and-tell, tip and tricks, and the ever-popular Deal-or-Duds, along with great fellowship. For more information contact. Don Winn at donswinn@gmail.com

LSR Division 8 - Texas Gulf Division – Houston
Division 8, the Texas Gulf Division, meets the 2nd Saturday every *odd* month from 10:00 am to 12 Noon at the Tracey Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, TX 77042. For more information contact Phil Stewart at pstewart1225@yahoo.com.

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Alamo Model Railroad Engineers - San Antonio
The Alamo Model Railroad Engineers meets the 2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Zucht Building at the Texas Transportation Museum, 11791 Wetmore Rd., San Antonio TX. For more information call Peter Shavney (210) 317-3661 or Gene Turner (210) 355-2777; or visit the web site www.alamomodelrailroadengineers.com.

Austin Model Railway Society - Austin
The Austin Model Railway Society is a HO scale modular group that is open to new members and meets once a month. For more information please email Steve Jackobs at president@austinrailway.org or visit the web site www.austinrailway.org.

The Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroaders - Jackson
Our mission: to educate and inform the public on the hobby of model railroading, associated disciplines, and to entertain both children and adults through our numerous displays featuring both model trains, real railroads and railroad safety. The Trains run from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month! THE PUBLIC IS INVITED! Located at the Republic of West Florida Historical Museum, 3406 College St, Jackson, LA. More information: http://www.greaterbrrailroaders.com/.

Houston Area "G" Gaugers - Rosenberg
On the 4th Sunday of each month, the Houston Area "G" Gaugers (HAGG) model train club meets at the Rosenberg Railroad Museum to run their special trains on the tracks of the Garden Railroad Exhibit. The museum also hosts fun seasonal activities for the kids on this day. Steam engines, circus trains, patriotic trains or everyone's favorite Thomas? You never know what trains you'll see. Rosenberg Railroad Museum, 1921 Avenue F, Rosenberg, TX. More information: info@RosenbergRRMuseum.org.

Houston Area Live Steamers
HALS has over 9,000 feet of track for you to enjoy and ride on most any Saturday of the year. Someone is usually there every Saturday with special run, operations, waybills/timetable, work and fun run days scheduled throughout the year. Our public run days are the 3rd Saturday of the month March through November. Come see our 2,500 foot expansion in Phase 4. Model Railroaders (any scale) are welcome to attend most any time. Check our web site out at www.hals.org for schedule of events or e-mail Rick White at rick.white.jr@gmail.com for more information.

New Braunfels Railroad Museum
Kids Fun Day is held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the New Braunfels Railroad Museum, 302 South San Antonio Street (in the 1907 Restored Railroad Depot), New Braunfels, TX. Museum phone (830) 627-2447. Kids of all ages will have the opportunity to run model trains and become a Jr. Engineer. Also among the displays at the Kids Fun Day will be a large US Army Model Garden (G) Scale and Lego Trains. Visit our Steam Engine, Caboose, Dining Car (available for Birthday Parties) and Box Car. There will be other fun, train related activities, additional model trains, train artifacts, our 1907 depot are on display. The Railroad Museum opens at 10:00 am on Saturdays. For field trip scheduling and more information, call Susan Riordon (210) 542-6121, or visit us at www.nbrrm.org.

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs – Irving
The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Visit the website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site, member clubs or sponsored events.

San Antonio Model Railroad Association - San Antonio
The San Antonio Model Railroad Association, SAMRA, is open to new members and meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Bob Clarke Rail Heritage Museum, 7702 Narrow Pass, Live Oak, TX. Please visit our website www.samratx.org for information about our activities and their dates and times. Also, like us on Facebook.

South Texas Railroad Socials – San Antonio
The "Socials" are a casual gathering of train folks in South Texas, both modelers and prototype railfans. We gather quarterly for a couple hours of Clinics and Presentations, Show-n-Tell, regional news, Q&A and funny video clips. Not a meeting, not a club, just buy lunch at the restaurant and use their party room. Meetings are both in-person and virtual (via Zoom). Plus, we have Shop Talk, a quarterly 'project guys' round table gathering, in between the Socials. Read more, see photos from past Socials and find our next date, at www.SouthTexasRR.com.

Texas Northern Model Railroad Club – Dallas (North)
The Texas Northern Model Railroad Club business meeting is the 1st Thursday of the month and has regular meetings on Thursday evenings and most Saturdays. If you like to operate, come by on Tuesday nights to join our weekly operation session. Located in North Dallas at 11999 Plano Road., Suite 154, Dallas, TX 75243. For more information: www.texasnorthern.org.

Texas Western Model Railroad Club – Forest Hills
The Texas Western Model Railroad Club meets for its business meeting every 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm. The Club is located at 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. For more information: (682) 587-2092 or www.twmrc.org or email cdo@twmrc.org.

EXCURSION TRAIN TRIPS

Austin Steam Train; Cedar Park, TX; (512) 477-8468; www.austinsteamtrain.org

Grapevine Vintage Railroad; Grapevine, TX; (817) 410-3185; www.gvrr.com

Old Hickory Railroad; Jackson, LA; (225) 634-7397; www.louisianasteamtrain.com

Texas State Railroad; Palestine & Rusk, TX; (888) 987-2461; www.texasstaterr.com

Please consider our deadlines for submittals and publications to allow adequate lead time to correctly announce your event – upcoming column submission deadlines are the 15th of February, May, and August. Publication of the *Marker Lamp* is the following month. **ML**

Whose track goes there?

Can you figure out whose layout this photo is from? If you are the first person to email the correct answer to rrrduino@huntatrophy.com you'll win a campfire lighting Arduino!

TEXAS EXPRESS
DALLAS/FT WORTH 2023
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340
SP&S

SUPERCHARGED - HIGH SPEED

TEXAS EXPRESS

The 2023 NMRA National Convention

August 20-26

DALLAS/FORT WORTH, TEXAS
GAYLORD TEXAN RESORT GRAPEVINE

By Peter Kazmir

This summer, the Lone Star Region hosted an event for the first time in over 30 years: The NMRA National Convention. People from all over the world joined us in the Dallas/Fort Worth area to celebrate Model Railroading and the NMRA, create and renew friendships, and learn from each other.

By all accounts (including financially), the convention was a roaring success. I heard overwhelmingly good things from attendees about the content, organization, location, and people.

On the following pages, you'll find dozens of photos from the convention. These (and many more -- too many to include) were taken by staff and attendees, shared directly and via social media. Many thanks go to everyone who contributed. Please accept my apologies in advance if I've misspelled any names or misattributed any photos.

Below, I've listed everyone who was on the final LSR convention committee and who volunteered on staff. This convention would not have been possible without their very hard work. Thanks and congratulations to all!

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Chris Atkins
Dick Brannan
Craig Brantley
Kevin Buchanan
David Crumpton
John Garfield
Steve Gratke
David Grein
David Hager
Michael Harang
Jerry Hoverson, MMR
Ken Kaiser
Peter Kazmir
Michelle Kempema
David Kranda
Joe Leising
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Vic McTee
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Christina Zambri

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Russell Gifford
Charles Gross
Kathy Gross
Johnnie Harris
Phyllis Hoverson
Don Hummel
Paul Hutchins
Bob Johnson
Tim Kerfoot
Dave Kohler
Brian Lingle
Dean Lippincott
David Lundsford
Juli Mabry
Chris Mahan
Edward Mahon
Bob Mangrum
Kathy Martinez
Steve McGrath
Betty Mitchell
Dave Mock
Rich Mossholder
Stephanie Muller
Don Murphy
Mal Noone
Tom Pearson
Lisa Powell
Cinthia Priest
Stephen Priest
David Ranney
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Marita Richards
Melvin Richards
Dan Schueler
Eric Smith
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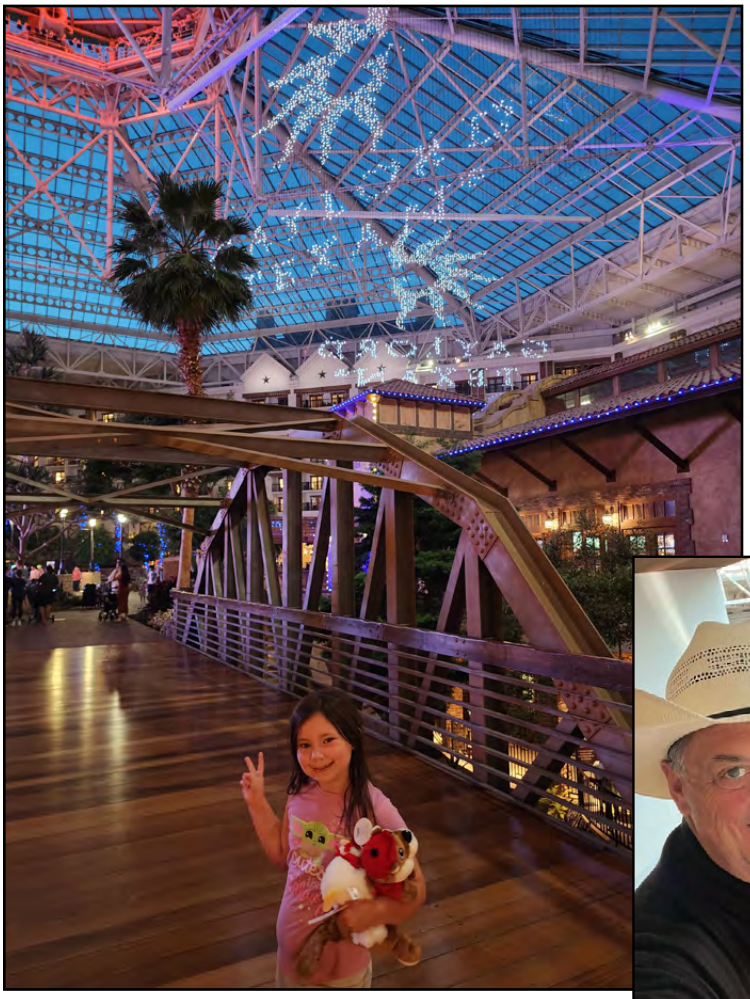
Thomas Stephens
Mike Walter
Jay Waters

Registration

Photos by Michael Harang

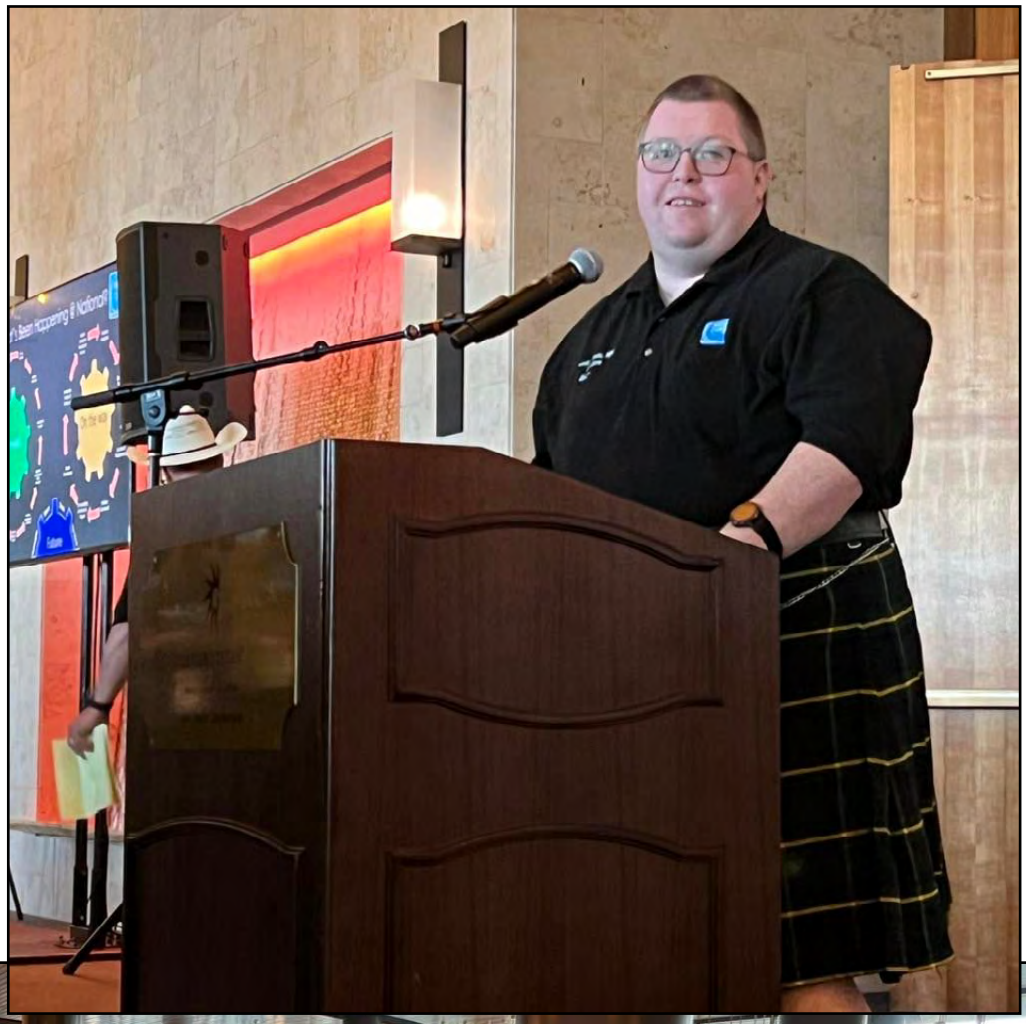
Settling In



Isabelle Zambri, John Doehring, and Cinthia Priest were ready to go!
Photos by Christina Zambri, John Doehring and Michelle Kempema

The Gaylord had two model railroads in the Atrium
Photo by Michael Harang

President's Reception



The convention opened with a reception hosted by NMRA president Gordy Robinson, MMR, in his trademark (and native) kilt. *Photos by Riley Triggs*

NMRA Board Meeting & Dinner

After a productive meeting the Board enjoyed a nice dinner together (Speed Muller and Michelle Kempema pictured). *Photos by Michael Harang, Riley Triggs, and Christina Zambri*

Prototype Tours

After getting settled in it was time for events to begin! There were tours of the McKinney Avenue Streetcar Shops, the Texas State Railroad and Shops, Historic Railroad Stations, and the Grapevine Vintage Railroad. A popular tour was to the BNSF Network Operations Center and Alliance Intermodal Yard (shown here) .
Photos by Lews Therin

Another Tour visited the Museum of the American Railroad in Frisco, including *TrainTopia*. *Photos by Michelle Kempema*

Another crowdpleaser was the tour to Saginaw. Here, three three BNSF and UP lines interchange with plenty of railfanning opportunities. In addition, several grain elevators provide both prototypical industry action plus amazing vantage points.
Photos by Chris Atkins and Speed Muller

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D&RGW

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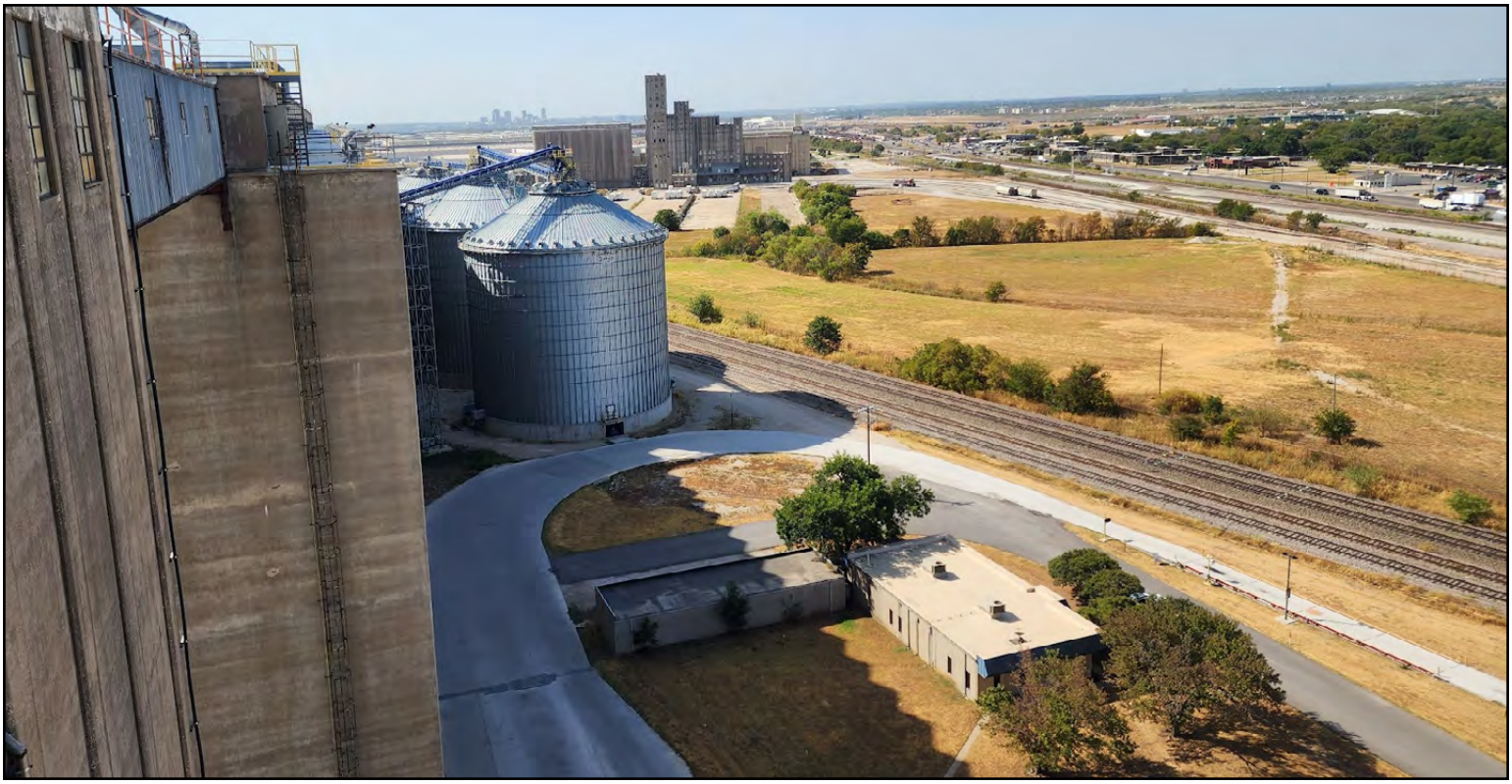
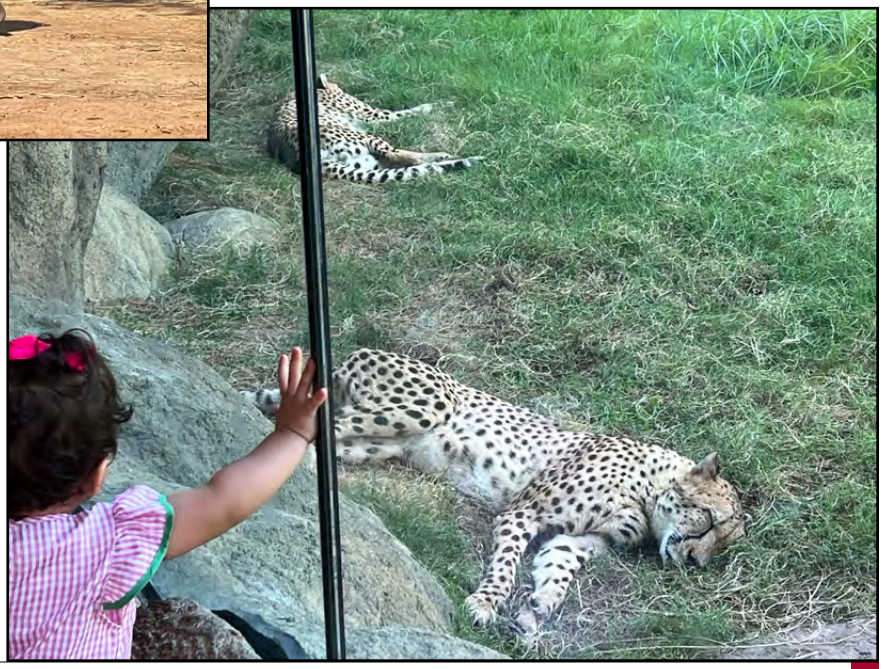
Valero



VITERRA

General Interest Tours



There were a number of great general interest tours at the convention, including tours of the JFK Museum and Dealey Plaza, the George W. Bush Presidential Center, and the Modern and Kimbell Art Museums, plus a wine tasting tour. Pictured here are some sights from the Fort Worth Zoo tour.
Photos by David Hager

Model Railroads & Op Sessions

If you wanted to see some model railroads, the convention was the place to be, with dozens of high-quality layouts in the DFW area. In addition to bus and self-guided tours, the Operations SIG hosted a number of operating sessions all week and the Layout Design SIG hosted a special tour of interesting layouts. The Operations Roadshow also set up a large modular layout at the convention center and invited attendees to participate.

Above: Lorrie & Leo Palitti's Black Bear and Bayou Railroad.
Photos by Riley Triggs and Betty Mitchell

Visiting Greg McComas' Michigan Interstate (above) and Tim Blackwell's layouts (below). *Photos by Riley Triggs*

Many attendees took the opportunity to visit several live steam railroads in the area. These two photos are from the Bucksnort Northern Railroad in Van Alstyne.
Photos by Jerry Hoverson

Here folks take a ride on the Able Springs & North Texas Railroad in Terrell.
Photos by Emory Lehman

Visiting the Texas Northern Model Railroad Club layout

Assembling to operate Chris Atkins' Sheridan and Everywhere West
Riley Triggs Photo

Peter Kazmir dispatching remotely - from the convention floor - for an operating session at Speed Muller's TxNamib Railroad.
Peter Kazmir Photo

Operating Session on Jerry Hoverson's
Rocky Mountain Central & Colorado Pacific Railroad
Photos by Michael Harang

SPOKANE
333

NORTHERN PACIFIC
NORTHERN PACIFIC
NORTHERN PACIFIC
107
NORTHERN PACIFIC

Scenes from Dean Ferris' N-Scale Oregon Joint Line, which was also featured on the convention web site. *Photos by Peter Kazmir*

A team of model railroaders set up the Operations Road Show modular layout at the convention and invited attendees to learn how to operate on the layout throughout the week.
Photos by Kalen Matson, Lee Calkins, Lews Therin, Marshall Peterson, and Michael Harang

UNION PACIFIC

EXIT
PILOT
TEXAS EXPRESS
UNION PACIFIC

Layout Design SIG

Article and Photos by Don Winn, MMR

The Layout Design Special Interest Group (LDSIG) traditionally has a strong presence at the national conventions, and the 2023 Texas Express was no exception.

Kicking off the week on Sunday night, the LDSIG hosted a meet-and-greet, allowing layout owners to share what they are doing.

During the week, the LDSIG presented a number of fine clinics related to designing your layout for increased realism. The group provided free layout design consultations for anyone looking for input on their layout.

On Thursday night, the LDSIG held its annual dinner at Babe's Chicken Dinner house. Keynote speaker for the event was Gary Ray, an accomplished layout

builder who recently moved to the DFW area.

The highlight of the week was the LDSIG layout tour on Wednesday. Over 100 people participated in this event, carpooling to the 20 layouts that had been pre-selected. Feedback from both layout owners and participants was very positive.

TEXAS
EXPRESS

BE UNREASONABLE
Spectrum
ENTERPRISE
TEXAS
EXPRESS

Women in Model Railroading

Article and Photos by Michelle Kempema

The NMRA Special Interest Group, Women In Model Railroading (WIMRR), was introduced right before the 2022 NMRA National Convention in Saint Louis. WIMRR began as a program of the Colorado Model Railroad Museum, now amplified by the NMRA as a Special Interest Group.

Why start Women in Model Railroading? The answer is easy, we want to support the women in the hobby. That is not just women who model, although there are many who do! There are women in every aspect of the hobby of model railroading; from the manufacturing of product to the wives that attend events. WIMRR hopes to create connections for all the women in the realm of model railroading.

At the 2023 Texas Express National Convention in Grapevine, TX, Women in Model Railroading hosted two main events. The Operations Road Show Freemo-N layout graciously allowed time one evening for a Women in Model Railroading Operating Session. There were women there who ranged from experienced operators to women who were joining their very first ops session. There was also a social gathering event sponsored by Walthers, Inc. and Soundtraxx. These events helped create new connections and friendships for those who participated.

Over the past year the WIMRR has created a few more activities including a monthly Zoom "Hang Out" on the 2nd Friday of each month. This is a casual setting where most of the participants are working on modeling projects while they talk. At the Amherst Railroad Hobby Show in January we planned a cookie social at 3pm on Saturday in the NMRA booth to introduce attendees to the new SIG. We also packaged cookies and delivered them to the women who were in retail booths around the show.

There are currently 135 members of WIMRR. If you are interested in joining WIMRR, which is open to everyone, not just women, please go to NMRA.org and find the link to join under the Special Interest Group tab at the bottom of the page where WIMRR is listed.

Becky Anderson and Vicki du Mee operating on the Free-moN Operations Road Show layout for WIMRR.

Beverly Farnham, MMR, operating during the WIMRR event.

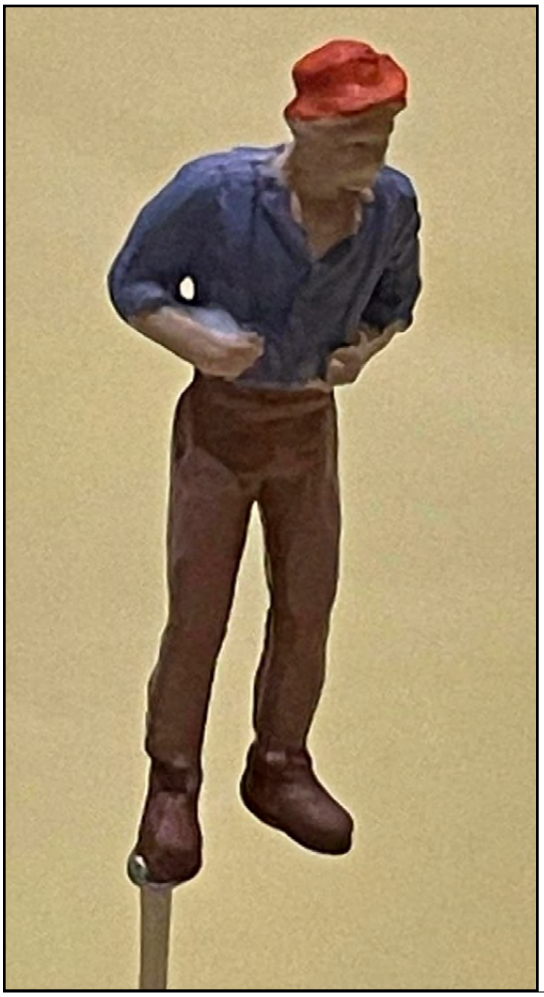
Vicki du Mee and Becky Anderson review their train orders during the WIMRR operating session.

Michelle Kempema and Cinthia Priest are conductor and engineer for the WIMRR op session.

Clinics

With over 150 clinics, many with multiple sessions, there was something for everyone. Included were several make-and-take clinics and special Modeling with the Masters clinics, presented by MMRs. *Photos by Riley Triggs, Dave Insley, Peter Kazmir, Divina Gato-Hogno, and Michael Harang*

SC&W
TEXAS EXPRESS



• NEW NMRA Interchange – Interact, meet, learn, and share wit
24/7!
• Model RR Layout Directory – Visit and tour member layouts du
• Insurance
• Publications – Magazine (Now in Digital and Print), eBulletin, T
• Hobby Shop, attraction and museum discounts
• Conventions, events, meetings, etc.
• Access to places or events you might not normally get
• Access to members from all over the world – sharing knowled
of your own circle

2N4401

Let's go!
Open from the provided folders in Code/SetupClinic
001_Blinkslow_with_Serial.ino

Foundation: Defining the dream
Everything flows out of the proper priorities
Realistic ops is my passion
Ops is why I do everything else
Ops is mostly visual
Quality of run vs. quantity of run
Predictable performance
There's more to it than you think
Preventative measures paramount
The "Chester Principle"
Finally, something to tackle "Murphy's Law"
Make it run like a
Dream

Tell a Story...
EXIT

SierraWest

First, clean your track well
Alternatively, get some gun cleaning Q-tips and clean by hand.
I use one Q-tip dipped in solvent ...
... then follow up with two more clean dry Q-tips to remove the loose black gunk.

MAKING ROCKS
Coloring the rock:
Generally a base color
A darker shade of same color for shadows
A lighter shade of same color to highlight
Which direction is the sun?

Carl
Modeling with the Masters
Peter
Jim
Modeling With The Masters

TEXAS
EXPRESS

Railfanning

There were an amazing number of railfanning opportunities across the DFW area with busy BNSF, UP, KCS (now CPKS), Amtrak, Fort Worth & Western, and other railroad and commuter lines, plus multiple large yards. Sadly, Tower 55 is no longer with us.

Photos by Peter Kazmir

General Interest Activities

Artlcle by Vicki Price
Photos by Vicki Price, Christina Zambri, and Peter Kazmir

There were a number of creative general interest acitivities during the convention for those who participated. Each day had its own craft class that included making a gnome magnet from a wine cork, a make-and-take cricut demonstration, and a hands-on cake decorating demonstration. There were puzzles, games, and card making supplies available all week for people to enjoy. We had loads of fun on Bingo night, seeing the joy on people's faces when they won a prize! A fun-filled week was had by all!

Project Linus was a successful event! We had six sewing machines set up with the prepackaged quilts kits and supplies to complete the quilts. The ladies came in on Monday and got right to work, and with all the machines a-buzz I said, "Ladies, there is water back here in the corner if you need it; I wouldn't want anyone to think I'm running a sweat shop in here." Everyone had a good laugh! By week's end, we had completed fifteen beautiful quilts! It was a blessing to participate in this project and to see so many people willing to give of their time to provide for people in need.

The fifteen quilts and left over batting were donated to the Tarrant County Chapter of Project Linus on September 13, 2023. The people from Project Linus were very appreciative, and said that the quilts would be distributed to children within two weeks.

For anyone who would like more information about Project Linus, here's a link: https://www.projectlinus.org.

Mini Dioramas

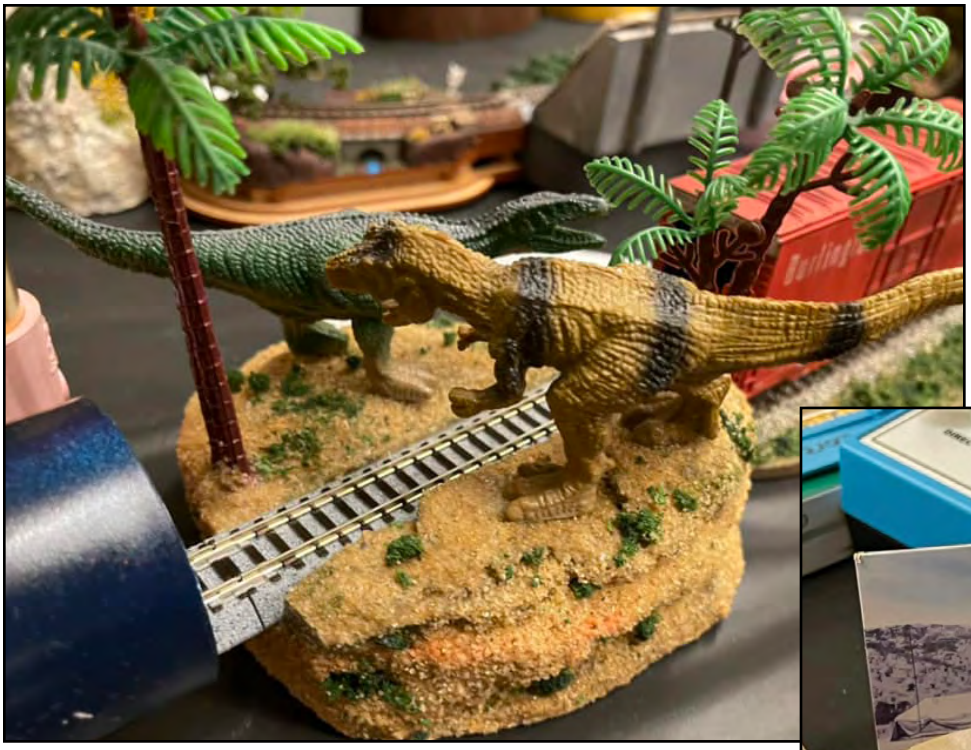
The mini diorama idea originated in Japan to give kids an educational contest they could participate in at their national convention. At our convention, participants created entries for Kato's "circus" at the National Train Show that included raffle prizes for lucky participants. Here are some photos of the event and some of the entries (there were way too many to include all of them). (See more on Facebook!)

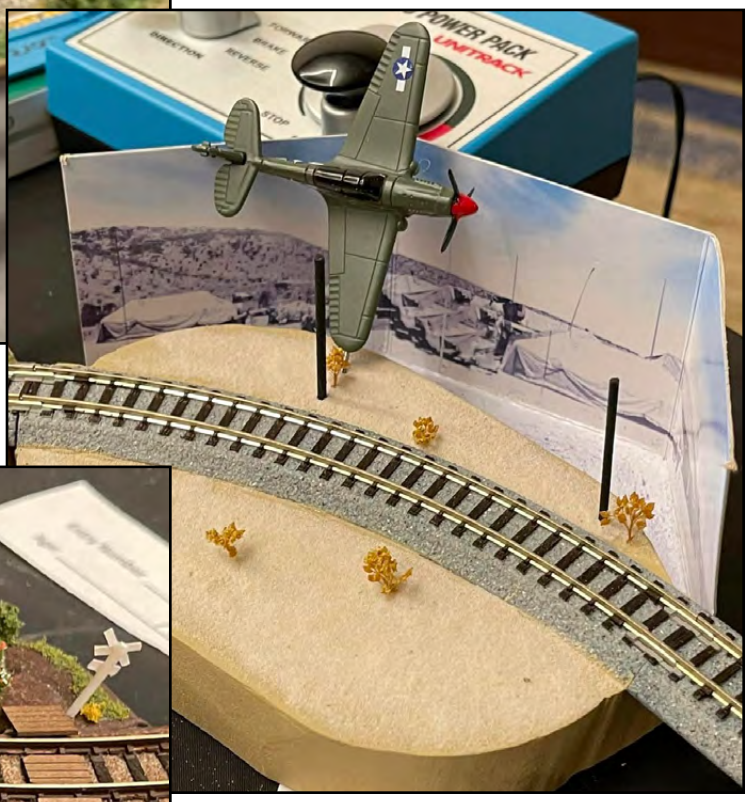
Photos by Stephen Moore, Ichiro Uematsu, and Michael Harang

THE BEST LITTLE
OUTHOUSE IN TEXAS
RT WORTH, TEXAS
TEXAS

Burlington
HYDRAULIC
CUSHIONING
Burlington
Route

ILFANS




POWER PACK
UNITRACK

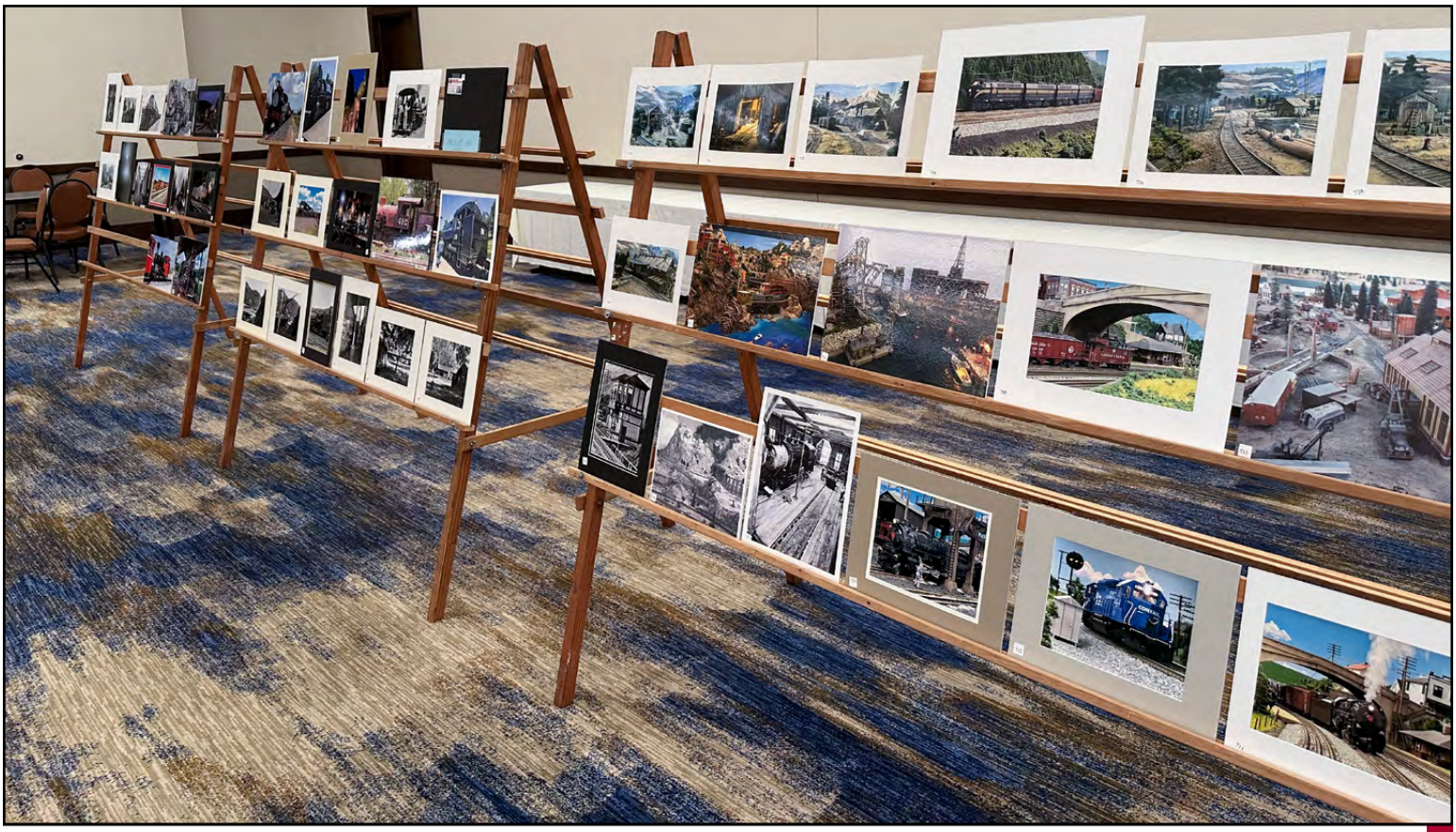
KATO
N-GAUGE

Celebration Room & Contest

One of the highlights of any convention is the Celebration Room and this year's edition didn't disappoint: There were dozens of high-quality contest entries and items on display. Here are some images from the room, and the awards ceremony. The full set of winners can be found in the *NMRA Magazine*.

Photos by Michael Harang, Peter Kazmir, and Divina Gato-Hogno

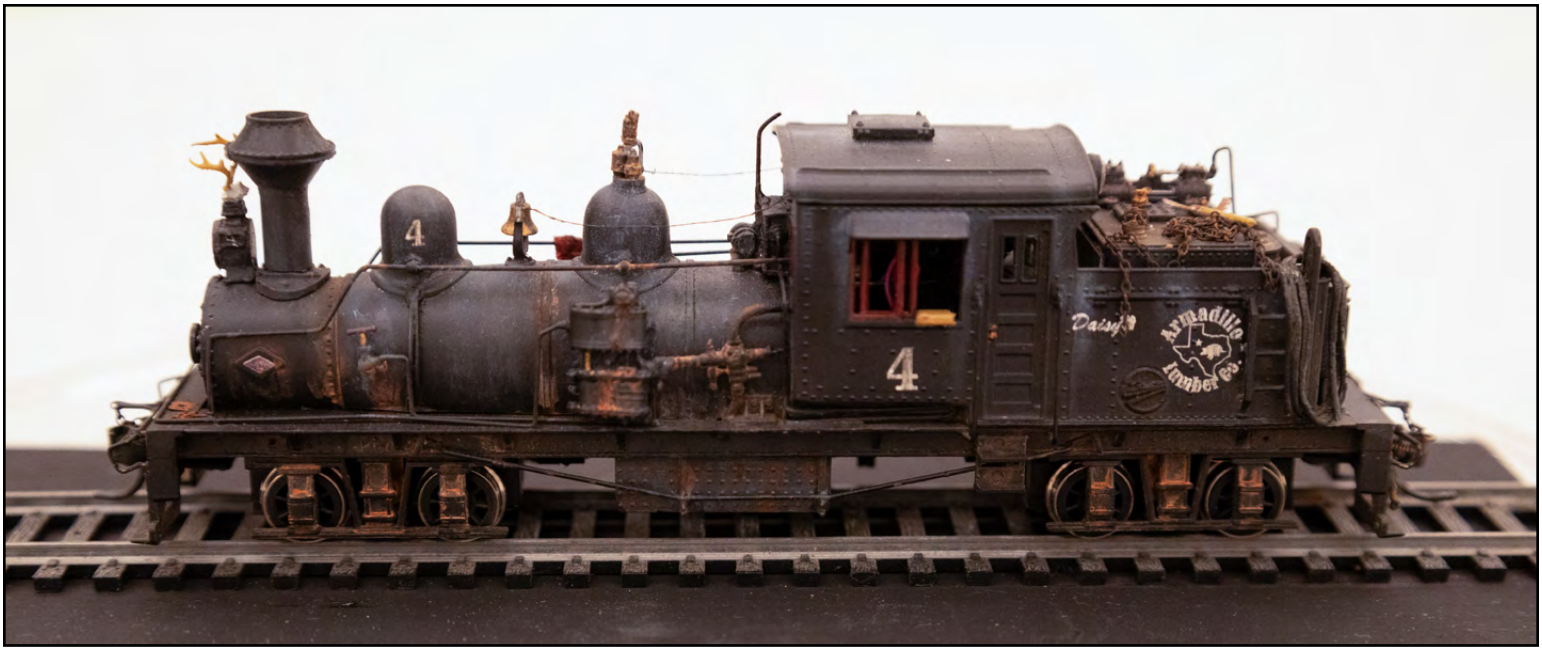
SANTA FE
3872
A.T.&S.F.



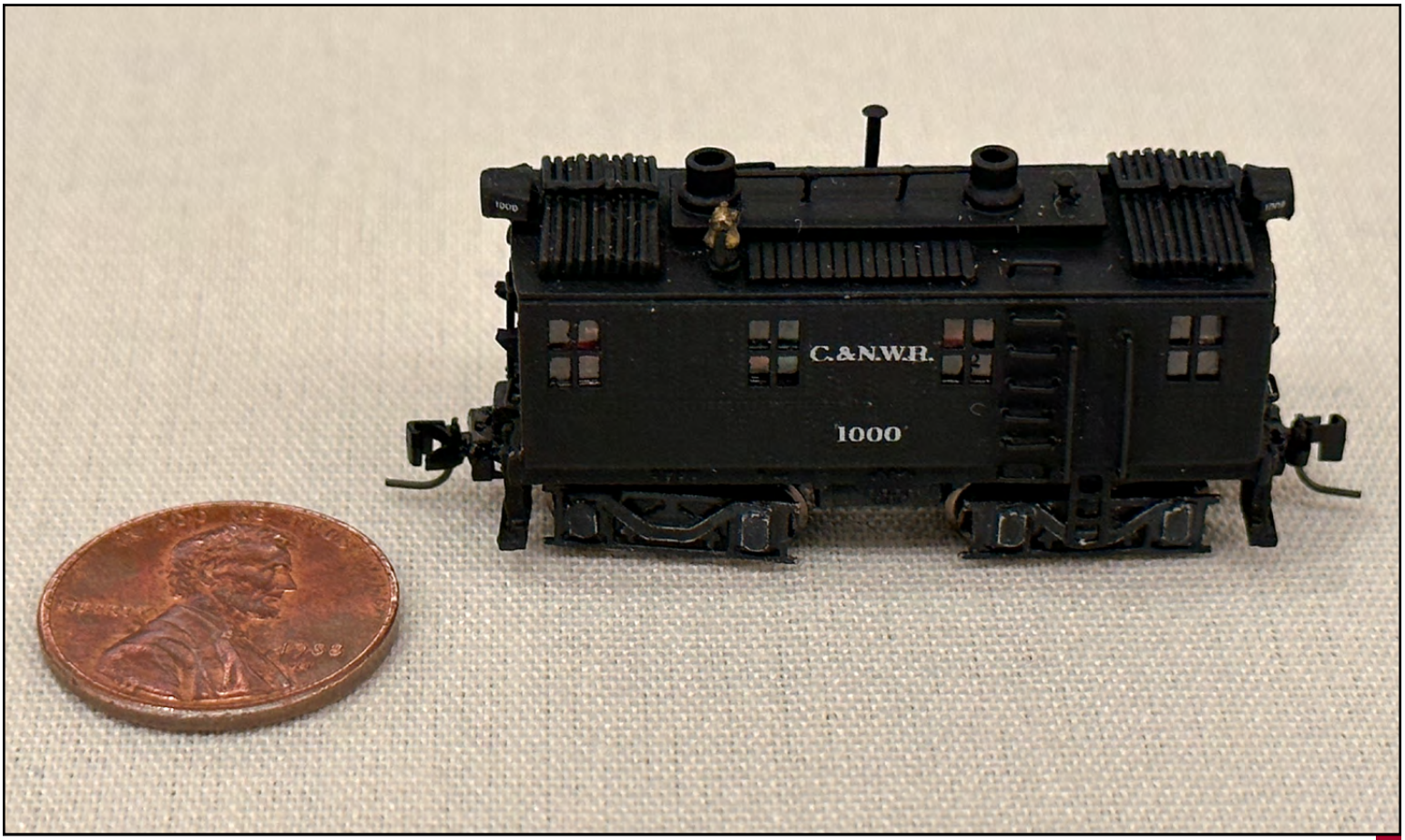
Judged Model Contest
Kit Built
Motive Power—Diesel and Other

3535
WAMX
3535

403
404


4
4
Daisy
Armadillo
Lumber Co.

Judged Model Contest
Kit Built
Display


C.&N.W.R.
1000

L&N
Yellow Rose
Amarillo Lumber Co.

407

AUSTIN & TAYLOR
& PACIFIC
A&T&P
2732
MARKET RAIL
EXPRESS SERVICE
WINS. 2-72

Model Contest
Chairman's
Award

Second Place

Railroadiana
First Place

Scratch Built
Freight Car
First Place
Second Place

Second Place

Scratch Built
Display
First Place

Third Place

Kit Built
Diesel and Other Loco
First Place

302

Banquet

The Convention closed with the banquet, which featured great food, great friends and a great guest speaker: writer, fomer weather forecaster for ABC's *Good Morning America*, and host of *Tracks Ahead*, Christian Spencer. *Photos by Peter Kazmir, Michael Harang, Riley Triggs, and Divina Gato-Hogno*

SCALE

GAYLORD TEXAN
RESORT & CONVENTION CENTER
on Lake Grapevine

National Model Railroad Association, Inc.
Donna Ott
The President's Award
TEXAS EXPRESS

TEXAS EXPRESS

National Model Railroad Association, Inc.
David Insley
The President's Award
TEXAS EXPRESS

TEXAS EXPRESS

Cindy Robinson, VP&S
President
2021 -
National Model Railroad Association, Inc.
Riley Triggs

Cindy Robinson, VP&S
President
2021 -

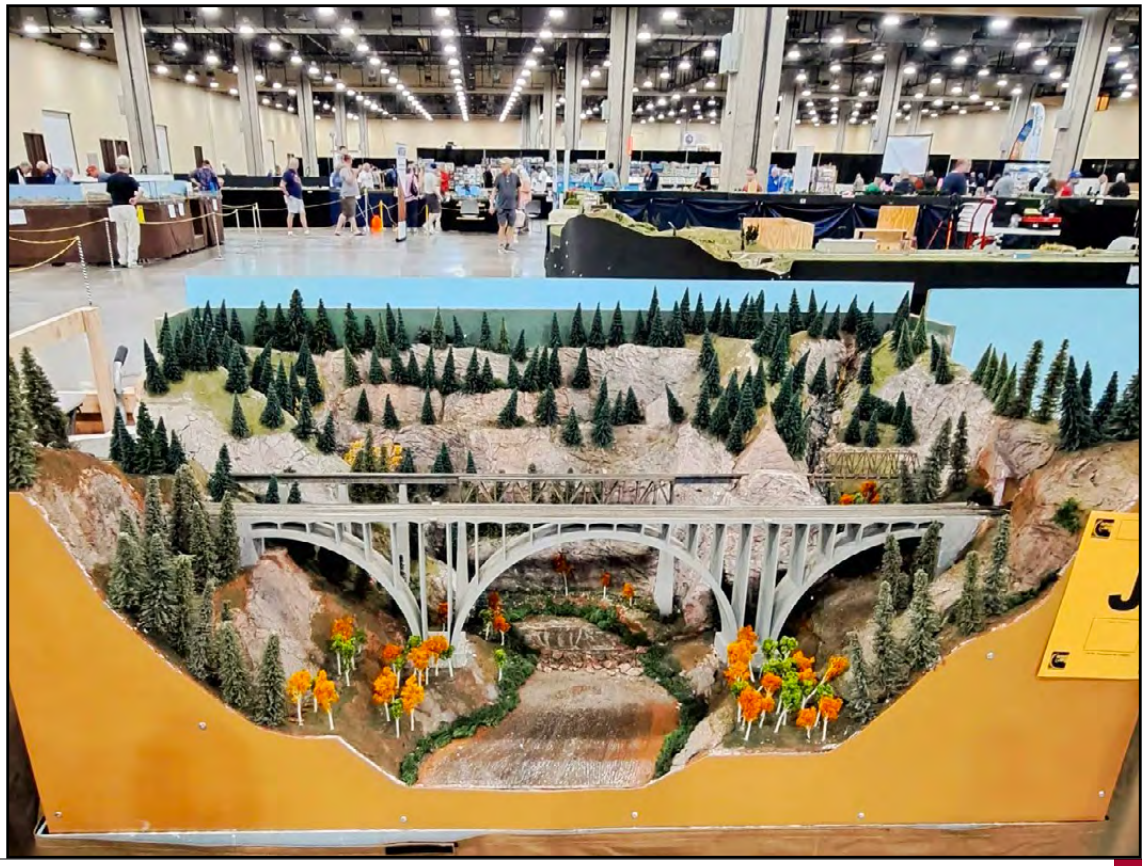
National Train Show

Finally, the National Train Show was also held in conjunction with the convention. It was well attended by people from all over the DFW area, with many local favorites as well as national manufacturers present.
Photos by Riley Triggs, Michelle Kempema, and David Irace.

nmra
.org
National Ma
The NMRA su
model railroac
providing educo
programs that
member en
LOLA BIMBA
EZEQUIEL DURAN
RILEY
TRIGGS
ADVERTISING
CHAIR

Harrison
Farm
Supply
COOP

SBK Hobby Supply
TEXAS EXPRESS
TEXAS EXPRESS
FINAL FOUR



WHERE THE EAGLE MEETS THE CHIEF

THE 2024 NMRA LONE STAR REGION CONVENTION
HOUSTON/PASADENA, TEXAS

Register Today!

https://turbotrains.com/2024lonestar/

The Lone Star Region 2024 Convention will be held in the Houston area at the Pasadena Convention Center **February 15-17**. It will be held in conjunction with the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club train show on Saturday.

All convention attendees will get FREE admission to the train show by showing your convention badge - and can get in one hour before the general public.

We will have all of the normal convention activities: Clinics, Contest Room, Operations, Layout Tours and plenty of activities for the spouses.

Registration is $80.00 for the primary registration and $50.00 for spouse and children. **All registrations include a BBQ dinner on Saturday night.**

We have secured a special rate at the LaQuinta on Sam Houston Parkway at a guaranteed rate of $87.00 per night for a King Room or Double Queen room.

To get the special rate you need to email Michelle at lq53239tx@gmail.com and give her your phone number and tell her that it is for the LSR Convention. Michelle will call you back to book the room.

If folks reserve through Michelle the rate could drop to $75.00 per night if over 15 rooms are booked so please book early!

THE ORIGINAL ★ SINCE 1973

2024 AUSTIN TRAIN SHOW

25,000 square feet of model railroading fun for the whole family!

Operating Model and Lego Railroads
Clinics • Train Ride • Raffle • Home Tour
Hundreds of Vendor Tables
All Scales - Buy and Sell

Admission $8 in advance • $10 at the door
Includes both days
Children 12 and under FREE with adult

Saturday August 24 10:00am - 5:00pm
Sunday August 25 10:00am - 4:00pm

Palmer Events Center
900 Barton Springs Road

Information & Table Sales: austintrainshow.org

Do you live in central Texas?

Whether you're new to model railroading, want a large layout but don't have the room, or just want to hang out with friends...

Come join us!

The Austin Model Railway Society is an HO scale club. Members of all ages meet monthly and participate in many ways, from electronics to scenery to operations.

AUSTIN MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY
EST AMRS 2017

For more information and how to join, check out our website at austinrailway.org!

Chair and Director Reports

Reports submitted in September 2023

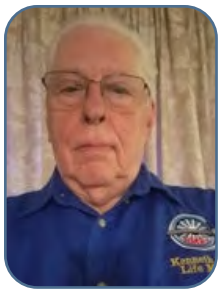
Achievement Program

by Duane Richardson, MMR
LSR Achievement Chair
pinecreekstation@verizon.net

First	Last	Certificate	LSR #
Pete	Leach, MMR	Official	887
Tom	Greco	Golden Spike	888
David	Griffith	Scenery	889
Don	Winn	Scenery	890
Don	Winn	MMR	891
Jay	Waters	Scenery	892
Tom	Greco	Civil	893
Tom	Greco	MMR	894
David	Crumpton	Cars	895
Eric	Smith	Author	896
John	Garfield	Cars	897

Congratulations to our two new MMRs, Don Winn and Tom Greco. Here's a photo of Don receiving his plaque:

Membership



by Ken Kaiser
LSR Membership Chair
kbk1@flash.net

During the period of June though August, our membership decreased by 39 to 900. THe main reason for leaving the NMRA is no longer membership dues, but the inability to travel the distances to division meetings. Conducting meetings via Zoom or in varying locations might be a solution.

Nominations

by Pete Leach, MMR
LSR Nominations Chair
pleachtx55@gmail.com

The nomination process for the 2024 elections of officers is underway! Up for election, or reelection, are the following positions:

- Vice President
- Secretary
- Div 2 Director
- Div 4 Director
- Div 6 Director
- Div 8 Director
- ALL 3 Director at Large positions

Please give it some thought if you would like to run (or rerun) for any of these positions! The region cannot run without good people taking a leadership role. Contact me if you're interested.

Treasurer

by Steve Sandifer
LSR Treasurer
steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net

Even though you elected me in May, and I was later added to the bank account, it was only in December that my signature was finally approved for our account. Donna and I have made numerous trips to the bank, filled out forms, shown minutes of board meetings, etc. in attempts to get things straight. It took a phone call to corporate to finally complete things, we think.

With that out of the way, I will be following up with Marker Lamp advertisers to ensure that they are up-to-date with payments and will be looking at secure ways to earn interest on our funds. It seems poor stewardship to have $44,000 doing nothing.

Division 8 has not requested any seed money for the February convention nor have the accounts been finalized for the national convention. I hope you plan on coming to Houston in February. I will be hosting an operating session and presenting a clinic in addition to chairing the train show. Tables for the train show have been sold out for months and include a number of estates where there will be bargains galore.

Treasurer Report

Net Worth as of 12/26/2023	
Assets	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
Bank of America	$44,375.48
Outstanding Checks	$183.71
Total Assets:	$44,191.77
Liabilities	
Restricted: Bob Clark Award	$448.86
Restricted: DeLattre Fund	$578.00
Restricted: Div. 7	$172.50
Total Liabilities:	$1,199.36
Overall funds available	$42,992.41

Cowcatcher Division 1

by Dick Brannan
director@cowcatcherdivision.org

cowcatcherdivision.com

The Cowcatcher Division continues to build off our strong start in the first quarter of this year.

We had a number of outstanding clinics during the spring and summer, including a Zoom clinic conducted by Joe Fugate, "Make It Run Like a Dream", "Wiring Your Layout for Peak Performance" by Tom Pearson and "Deciduous Trees" by Mike Ross, MMR. We are seeing strong attendance at our monthly meetings generally in the 50 to 55 range.

We also borrowed a great idea from Division 3, where members open their layouts for an "Open House" after our monthly meetings. The address of the open house is announced at the meeting, with the obvious intent of drawing more members to the meeting.

This summer, Division 1 members put on a clinic at Model Railroad Crossing, a hobby shop in Hurst, Texas, to encourage membership in NMRA. It was extremely well received and increased traffic in the hobby shop. We also staffed a membership table at the Red River RPM meet in Forest Hills, TX, late in June.

After a successful NMRA convention, the Division looks forward to a Zoom clinic by Bob Frankrone on making loads for your rolling stock and a "Make and Take" Loading Dock as well as our Christmas Party.

Dick Brannan
Director- Cowcatcher Division

Bayou Division 2

by Rod Fredericks
fredericks.rod@gmail.com

No report received.

Trinity River Division 3

by Charles Goodrich, MMR
director@cowcatcherdivision.org

trinityriverdivision.org

No report received.

Cen-Tex Division 4

by Bob Thiele
director@centexnmra.org

centexnmra.org

I can not believe that the summer is almost over, and we are headed into fall. Of course, the temperature is still feeling like the dog days of summer and will most likely stay that way for a while. It was great seeing all the D4 members at the National Convention in Grapevine TX. In every clinic that I attended, I picked up some new ideas or information that I can use going forward. I think the thing that I enjoy the most is shooting the breeze with people I have not seem in a while and catching up on what they have been doing.

Our meeting in September was an enjoyable time with members having the opportunity to work on our Division shelf layout. Joel Davidson did a great job giving a clinic on basic soldering techniques and the tools needed to do the job. You will be able to get the information that Joel presented soon on the division website. We put that knowledge to use when we did some soldering on the layout track.

The cork sheets that were used was purchased from Hobby Lobby in the picture frame section. Basically it is cork for peg boards and comes in 1/16" or 1/8" thickness.

Several modelers brought in their projects to present at show and tell. Steve Blackson MMR showed some scratch built G scale switches, a crossover, and crossing. He also brought a G scale Porter locomotive with work car that contains all DCC the electronics.

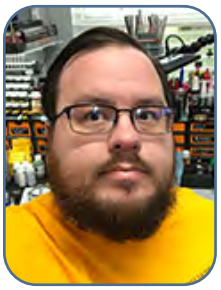
Jerry Wilson came with examples of hand laid track and switches. The switches were made using the "Fast Track" system which will be demonstrated at the November meeting.

Wayne Jones has been working on updating the scenery on his home layout. He has been building trees which are more realistic and lifelike. He will be bringing in the finished product at the next meeting.

Tim Giraud showed us an inexpensive way to make trees.

Cliff Scherer has been working diligently on improving the Division website. One of the main improvements is the tab titled Topics. This will cover a variety of subjects including clinics, layouts, events/announcements, newsletters, and any project that we have going on. We hope to have the site filled out by the end of the year.

West Texas Division 5



by Brooks Willig
Headroadie2004@gmail.com

Newsletter

No report received.

South Texas Division 6

by Don Winn, MMR
donnswinn@gmail.com

Howdy South Texans,

I'm writing this from the Omaha airport, returning from the annual Burlington Route Historical Society meeting there. For those of you modelling a prototype railroad, or just have an interest in a prototype, I would encourage you to join your historical society. Most every class 1 fallen flag is represented by a group. These societies have a tremendous amount of information that you didn't know about.

At our June meeting, Bob Thomas presented the feature clinic: Introductions to JMRI operations on a small layout.

Basic Process to Set Up Operations
Survey the layout locations and goals for operations
Establish how you will handle staging / moving cars on-off layout
Define "Locations" in JMRI
Populate your car listing in JMRI, reviewing types available and location
Define "Routes" that trains will take
Assign "Trains" to these "Routes"
Build the "Trains" and have fun operating!
Operations in JMRI adds a great deal of fun, even for a small layout
Simple to In-Depth Options

We had a good discussion about designs for a division logo, and we presented our 2023 Youth Award to Devin Torres! Please congratulate Devin the next time you see him.

On the morning of our August 12 meeting, I was loaded up and all ready to go. I was getting over a cold or something, and I was strongly encouraged by my RN wife to not go and take my hacking cough into a room of mostly seniors. I apologize for missing the meeting. By all accounts, Bob Thomas did a great job of hosting the meeting. Thanks, Bob.

John Lowrance presented an interesting clinic, "What Industries for your Cars?" John talked about how to improve the realism of your layout by ensuring that appropriate cars are delivered to your industries.

2023 John Lowrance
What Industry for your Cars
THEME: MATCHING INDUSTRIES TO YOUR CARS
You already have cars, what industries use?
MOST ARE GENERIC – RR Marks
THINGS THAT "LABEL" THE CARS:
Loads (open top cars & flats)
Specific Car Types
Specific Company or Products
CANE SUGAR
These need special industries as destinations!

Don Scott hosted our layout tour this month at his Katy Southern focused on operations.

I was glad to see so many of you at the national convention in Grapevine. Everyone I talked to had a good time and came away with some new ideas to try. See other articles in this Marker Lamp about the convention. Our next LSR regional convention will be February 15-17 in Houston, in conjunction with the annual train show there.

Our upcoming meetings will still be at the Longhorn Café at 12311 Nacogdoches Rd, San Antonio, TX 78217.

As always, if there is anything I can do to help you in your modeling, please don't hesitate to contact me.

SAFETY FIRST – Be careful out there!

North Louisiana Division 7

by Don Kimmell
elf4kcs@me.com

No report received.

Texas Gulf Division 8

by Phil Stewart
pstewart1225@yahoo.com

texasgulfdivision.org

No report received.

Director At-Large

by Darrell Cowles
darrellcowles1@gmail.com

No report received.

Director At-Large

by Michael Harang
miharang@gmail.com

No report received.

Director At-Large

by Pete Leach, MMR
pleachtx55@gmail.com

This summer has been very busy with my hobby. I presented my Painting Figures clinic to our Division 8 group in June. I also presented my clinic on the New England Ice Trade to the San Jac Model Railroad club in August. Both were well received.

On the modeling front, I completed a 21" X 24" diorama scene based on the ice business in New England. This HOn30 effort included a scratch-built icehouse and 2-masted schooner. This was part of my experiment in modeling in this smaller gauge and scale. An article on the project is scheduled to be published in the Nov/Dec GAZETTE.

I also completed a scratch-built diesel switcher that I hope will qualify me for Motive Power AP certificate. I plan to have it scored before the end of the year.

I attended the National Narrow Gauge Convention in Denver this Aug/Sep. It was part of a road trip that had me put 2890 miles on my car. On the way to the convention, I visited a great HOn30 layout in Colorado Springs by Sam Brenner. He is modeling the Maine 2-Foot Moson Railroad in a small upstairs room. His layout features small HOn30 Forney locomotives WITH SOUND! I am now trying to figure out how to do that on my HOn30 Forney's!

The convention was well attended, and I saw many LSR folks there. I gave 2 clinics on Operations of my WW&F and Painting Figures. I had great fun and met some interesting folks. In fact, one invited me to his house after the convention to see his basement size layout of the Maine Central's Rockland Branch. His standard-gauge prototype crossed my narrow-gauge prototype in Wiscasset, Maine.

After the convention, my wife and I drove to Santa Fe, NM for a few days of sightseeing. While there, I got to visit with long time Maine modeler and former Model Railroader staff member Bob Hayden. Bob, along with Dave Frary, helped pioneer Maine 2-foot modeling back in the 1970s. He is now building his version of the Maine Central Rockland Branch in a large outbuilding. It was great spending time talking 2-Foot with Bob. Go figure: I drive all the way to Colorado to visit 3 Maine themed layouts!

A view across the deck of a schooner at an icehouse as a Forney steam locomotive delivers a boxcar load of sawdust in this HOn30 diorama. The schooner and icehouse are scratch built.

SurfLiner 2024
NMRA National Convention

August 4-11, 2024
Long Beach, California
surfliner2024.org
Long Beach, California

Make plans now to join us at the Westin Long Beach, just two blocks from the beach, harbor and pier! Activities are planned to include:

Operating Sessions - Layout Tours - More than 100 Clinics

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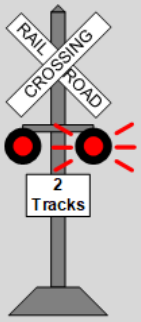

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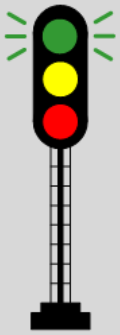

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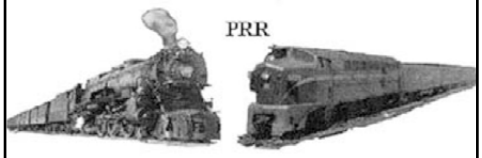

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